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COMMEMORATING THE THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIRST UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE STANDARDIZATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES

Paper submitted by the Islamic Republic of Iran

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In the view of the proposal suggested during the Seventeenth UNGEGN in New York 13-24 June, 1994 for allocating a commemoration at the Seventh UNCSGN on the occasion of Thirtieth anniversary of holding the UNCSGN , we are submitting the biographies of Iranian Moslem Geographers who had profound endeavors in geographical names.

Nasser Khosrow

Abu Mo'ein Hamidoddin Nasser Khosrow Ghabadiyani Marvzi, known as "the Hojjatt - e - Khorasan" was born at Ghabadiyan Marv in 394 A.H (1003 D.C) and died in 481 A.H (1088 D.C) at Yamgan Badakhshan. He learned the prevailing and common sciences of his era as he was young and he enjoyed a clear logic in his tongue and literary talent in poems and mental shrewdness in the perception of problems.

First he worked in the court of Mahmud Ghaznavee and Masoud Ghaznavee. He left the administrative and secretarial works of the Royals in 437 A.H (1045 D.C) and spent travelling seven years to **Mekkeh (Hejaz), Asian Minor, syria** and **Egypt**. the result of his travelling was the precious book of **"Safar Nameh"** (Travelling accounts of Nasser khosrow) which he wrote in 444 A.H.(1052 D.C)

His travelling began from **Marv** on the 23 th Sha'ban 437 A.H (1045 D.C) and one year later, after passing different cities which he mentioned in his book, he reached **Bait - ul - Moghaddas** in 438 A.H. (1046 D.C) Nasser goes from **Qods** to **Mekkeh** and from there to **Madineh** and once again through **Syria** goes to **Qods**. He,then, travels via sea to **Salehiyeh** and **Egypt**. Again from **Egypt** goes to **Gholzam** (by sea) and **Bandar Jar** which is situated parallel to **Madineh** and goes on pilgrimage to **Medineh** and Mekkeh and returns by the some route and then, again departs via **Nile** river to **Asyut** and **Akhmim** and **Ghos** and **Asvan** and **Sudan**. He returns to **Mekkeh** again and stays there for a six months and then from **Mekkeh** proceeds to the land of **Bani Savad** and **Basreh** and from there by ship and narrowly passing **Abadan** reaches **Persian Gulf.** After that, via Bandar Mahroban he sets out to Arjan, **Lurdeghan** and **Esfahhan.** Finally on tuesday 26th Jamadi ul Akher 444 A.H (1052 D.C), he completed his nearly seven - year travelling.

The result of nearly seven - year travelling is the precious daily notes of his observations and of what he heard during the travelling. After returning,he arranged his daily notes, demonstrating clear unambigious, reserved and far - sighted, into a form of ketab **"Safar Nameh."** This book is full of salient

information in knowing the parts of flourishing Islamic world in the second half of 5th Century containing deeds and traits, behaviours, believes and traditions of the different peoples including 750 geographical names about villages, persons and places.

Nasser Khosrow, from the beginning of his travelling, took notes of his observations and of what he heard and these vast and varied notes contain many various topics and include distances, geograpical features and locations of cities and villages, area demography, prevailing handicrafts, local religious and scientific personalities and local governors, quality of agricultural products, outstanding agricutural products and quantity of each products and their perservations, fortifications of city, various public buildings such as hospitals, Karvansars, bazars, Masjedjam's and their maintenances, standard of living and general welfares. **Furthermore, it should be noted that he is one of the early researchers who engaged himself in an extensive study of toponymy which is demonstrated clearly in his describing of 750 geographical names.**

In addition to being a great traveller, he is also known as a distingnished and salient Iranian poet, religious scholar and author. He left behind several works which are still illuminating in the Persian literatures among which are included in Annex No:1

In Annex No:2, there is a schematic route map of the travel of Nasser Khosrow

Annex 2 will be issued as document E/CONF.91/L.59/Add.1.

Annex No: 1

The other works of Nasser Khosrow:

1. Divan of poems including elegies and fragments.
2. Masnavi Sa'adat Nameh and Roshanai Nameh Manzum.
3. Zadol Mosaferin
4. Khane Akhavan.
5. Six chapters or Verses of Roshana'i Nameh Nasr.
6. Koshayesh and Rahayesh.
7. Bostan ul-'Oghol.
8. Lesan ul 'Alem.
9. 'Aja'eb ul San'eh.
10. Ekhtiyar ul Emam and Ekhtiyar Iman.
11. Jam'ul Hekmatain written in the name of Amir Badakhshan Amir Shamsul Din Abul Ma'ali Ali ebne Asad ebne Hares.

Istakhri

Istakhri: Abu Eshagh Ebrahim b.Mohammad Farsi Istakhri known as "Karkhi" was born and educated at Istakhr Fars and becoming a learned man, he went to many places as a traveller and established himself as a great geographer and the result of his geographical investigation was two books known as "**Suwar al-Akalim**" and "**al-Masalik wal Mamalik**" which were written in the manner of Abu Zayd Balkhi and from a comparative study of his books, one could conclude that he first wrote "**Suwar al Akalim**" and then completing it with full accounts of his findings in geography, he renamed the new book as "**al-Masalik wal Mamalik.**"

Istakhri, upon his observations and hearings, like Batlamyuse (Ptolemy) divided the world into seven continents (Eqlim). His works are highly distinguished as the pillar of geographical research in Islam and were used as a reference by the later scholars in geography. He travelled many Islamic countries including Arabic countries and Andulos.

He divided the Islamic realms into twenty territories including the regions of Arab territory, Maghreb territory, Derya-e-Pars, Egypt territory, Sham (Syria) territory, Daryae Rum, Jazireh territory 'Irak territory, Pars territory, Kerman territory, Khuzestan territory, Armenistan, Aran, Azerbaijan, Kuhestan, Tabarestan and Daylem, Darya-e-Khazar, Khorasan.

Istakhri in his books gave full accounts of natural features, geographical situation, distances and roads of each realms and also, like Balkhi, he provided colour and black-white maps in his book. He died in 346 A.H. (957 D.C) In addition, it should be worthy to note that the Istakhri's book, "al-Masalik wal Mamalik," is indeed on the toponymical studies in which he described rigidly the name and location of each town, city, country, territory, continent (Eqlim) and distances between them.